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ARTS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES ARTISTS OF TOMORROW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Wake County high school students who aspire to be a Cirque du Soleil dancer, an animation film producer and Broadway theatre performer are among the inaugural scholarship winners of Artist of Tomorrow, a community-funded City of Raleigh Arts Commission program. Five talented high school seniors were selected to receive one-time scholarships toward their full-time college studies in the fields of dance, theatre, music and the literary and visual arts.

"This program holds a very special place in my heart as an artist," said musician and songwriter Tift Merritt, whose career was born in Raleigh. "Investing in our future artists is investing in our future community."

The five Artists of Tomorrow scholarship winners are:

- Kayee Au, Enloe High School, visual art;
- Lauren Bullock, Middle Creek High School, literary;
- Emily Gardenhire, Apex High School, theatre/musical theatre;
- April Grossi, Leesville Road High School, dance; and,
- Lucas Morrow, Southeast Raleigh High School, music.

The Artist of Tomorrow program is fully funded through support and donations from corporations, individuals and local businesses, with 100 percent of contributions applied to the scholarships. Awarded funds will go directly to accredited post-secondary colleges and may be used to pay for student expenses such as tuition, fees, books, or room and board.

A committee comprised of community members and representatives from the City of Raleigh Arts Commission reviewed all applications submitted for Artist of Tomorrow scholarships prior to making final selections.

“This is going to be a great program for the future of our city,” said Arts Commission member Jim Baldwin, who is chair of the scholarship committee. “Artist of Tomorrow is providing the critical support needed to help young, local artists achieve a career in the arts.”

June Guralnick, executive director of the Arts Commission, said, “I am proud of the goal of our new Artist of Tomorrow program which is to ‘inspire a new generation of artists.’ ”

To read summaries on the five scholarship winners, visit <http://www.raleighnc.gov/arts>. For more information, contact Belva Parker, the Arts Commission's arts program coordinator, at 996-4683 or email Belva.parker@ci.raleigh.nc.us.

Established in 1977 as the official advisory body and advocate for the arts to the Raleigh City Council, the City of Raleigh Arts Commission holds the distinction of being the first municipal arts commission created in North Carolina. Serving as the leading force to champion the arts with Raleigh citizens and their representatives, the Arts Commission's myriad activities foster, support, and promote the arts in the Capital City.